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A SERMON,

ON SANCTIFYING THE LORD IN OUR HEARTS;

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1. Pet. 3. 15.—*But ſanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an anſwer to every man that aſketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you with meekneſs and fear.*

IT has been frequently the caſe, that the name of Chriſt could not be profeſſed but by riſking character, property and life. It was particularly ſo in the times of the apoſtles, and the early ages of Chriſtianity. It is theſe ſufferers whom the apoſtle addreſſes here in particular. Among other directions how to conduct themſelves in theſe tempeſtuous times, he enjoins thoſe in the text; which contains firſt, an injunction to ſanctify the Lord in their hearts: And ſecondly, to be ready to give an anſwer to thoſe aſking a reaſon of the hope within them; together with the manner in which this was to be done, in meekneſs and fear.

Before theſe injunctions can be complied with, they muſt be underſtood, and alſo their reaſons and binding nature ſhould be conſidered, ſo as to know how far they are obliga-

tory upon us; that we may the more readily be induced to a compliance. I ſhall therefore endeavour

Firſt—To ſhew what it is to ſanctify the Lord in our hearts, together with the reaſons and extent of the duty.

Secondly—What it is to be ready to give an anſwer, with meekneſs and fear, to thoſe enquiring a reaſon of the hope that is in us.

1ſt. I ſhall endeavour to ſhew what it is to ſanctify the Lord in our hearts; together with the reaſon and extent of the duty.

The word ſanctify and ſanctification, occurs frequently in Scripture, and has various ſignifications. It often ſignifies the work of the Spirit of God on the ſouls of men, by which they are recovered from their depravity, and conformed to the image of God. It alſo often ſignifies to ſeparate any thing to a holy uſe, as when God is ſaid to ſanctify the Sabbath. But it is plain, that in none of theſe ſenſes the word is to be taken in this place; as God's infinite purity puts him above any ſuch ſanctification. In ſome places he declares that he will ſanctify his great name, as in Ezek. 36. 23. which appears from the connection evidently to mean, a vindication of his character from the objections which the ſufferings and ſins of the Jews had raiſed among the heathen nations, whither they had been carried captive. In Iſa. 8. 13. the Prophet is directed, to ſanctify the Lord of hoſts himſelf, and to let him be his fear, and his dread: which evidently ſignifies, as appears by the context, that he ſhould cultivate in himſelf ſuch a realiſing ſenſe of the perfections, preſence, and glory of God, as would raiſe him above the fear of men. King Ahaz had entered into a confederacy with the king of Aſſyria, to help him againſt the united attack of the kings of Iſrael and Syria. This confederacy was diſpleaſing to God; and he commands the Prophet to have nothing to do with it, nor yet be in terror of the enemy, as the reſt of the Jews were; but to ſanctify the Lord in his heart—that is, to live under ſuch an influence of the preſence and perfection of Jehovah, as would raiſe him above the truſt or fear of men. Now in theſe two laſt places, the word ſanctify ſeems to have nearly the ſame ſignification as in the text. The Apoſtle is directing Chriſtians how to act in times of perſecution. One of theſe directions is to act an honeſt, upright part, which in general

would be a ſhield againſt ill-uſage. But ſtill if this would not do; if their oppreſſors were ſo malicious as to perſecute them for righteouſneſs' ſake, they were then to ſubmit to it, accounting it an honour thus to ſuffer. They were not to be terrified, nor yet troubled, but to ſanctify the Lord in their hearts; to have ſuch a ſacred regard to him, to live under ſuch an impreſſion of his preſence, power, juſtice and compaſſion, as would make them regardleſs of the threats and violence of the world. From this view of the connection, and the ſignification of the phraſe in other parts of ſcripture, I may venture to ſay, that to ſanctify the Lord in our hearts, is to have ſuch a ſtrong and abiding ſenſe of his character and preſence, as will make us regardleſs of the world when it would interfere with our duty.

Now this implies that we ſhould have becoming apprehenſions of God. I do not ſay a perfect comprehenſion of him, for this is beyond the graſp of creatures: but that our conceptions of him, as far as they go, ſhould be juſt or true, is abſolutely neceſſary. To be otherwiſe, would be profaning the name or character of the Lord, inſtead of ſanctifying it. It was thus that he declared his name profaned among the heathen by the ſufferings and ſins of his peculiar people, the Jews, as they thence formed degrading notions of his power and holineſs. God has given ſuch a revelation of himſelf in his works, but eſpecially in his word, as will enable us to form juſt conceptions of his character. But though this revelation meets us on every ſide,—though it is conſtantly proclaimed in our ears, and beams like day in our ſight, yet all, even the wiſeſt and the beſt, are prone to form wrong apprehenſions of the character of God; and thereby profane his name. It is particularly a diſcriminating mark of the wicked, that they do not conceive of God aright, but are forever conſidering him as one like themſelves. It is this that occaſions multitudes to make ſuch a mock of ſin: It is this which cauſes ſo many to think that injuſtice towards man, is much more criminal than neglect, diſreſpect and contempt of God and his ordinances. It is this that makes the greater part believe that God will not puniſh ſin in that awful manner repreſented in his word; that his wrath will not flame with that heavy and ceaſeleſs vengeance againſt the

finally impenitent, as he has positively declared. It is our conceiving so unworthily of God, that makes many of us find so little difficulty in believing that the son of God stooped to become the son of man, and died upon the cross; and it is the same which causes this astonishing display of condescension and love to be neglected, and the richest mercy to be slighted. In short, all the false systems of religion, all the false hopes of salvation, and the greater part of all wickedness, may be traced up to this source,—the having wrong apprehensions of the character of God.

But to sanctify the Lord in our hearts, implies not only that we should have true notions of our Creator, but also that we should have a firm, realizing belief of his existence and presence. No doubt there are many who, from catechisms and the scriptures, have embraced accurate conceptions of the divine character, at least profess to have done so, and yet can scarcely be said to believe that any such Being exists: at least they cannot be said to believe at all that such a Being is every where present, and knows all things, even the secret emotions of the heart. Perhaps there are none of us, but are conscious that we have frequently committed sins, which we would have been far from doing in the presence of our fellow men. And as far as this has been the case, so far we have been destitute of a realizing sense of the existence and presence of God; as certainly we would much less presume to sin under a consciousness of his notice, than that of mankind. It has been observed, and that with truth, that next to the Grace of God, there is not a greater preservative against sin, than a realising sense of the divine presence. This realizing belief, however, the bulk of mankind seldom or never have. They believe that there is a God, but they somehow also suppose that he intermedles not with human affairs; that the government is given up, and all things left to the decision of time and chance. Their actions, at least, declare this, as they act just in the way that we suppose one would do, who was firmly persuaded that all the scripture representations were falsehoods; and that, if there be a God, he has nothing to do with the concerns of the world. In fact, even the real christian does by no means keep up a constant, realizing sense of the existence and presence of God. Though he knows

that there is a God, and that he is always preſent, yet frequently this knowledge does not affect him, and he feels as dull and as ſtupid nearly, as if quite the contrary were true. It is certainly not their deſire thus to feel; and thoſe may be counted among their dulleſt, heavieſt hours, when dragged down by the objects of ſenſe, they cannot raiſe their thoughts to God, and rejoice that his providence and preſence extends to the minuteſt caſe. But there are alſo times when they get free from their ſhackles; the divine preſence is acknowledged and felt, and fervour is rekindled. In ſuch a caſe, dependence and vileneſs will be ſtrongly impreſſed; an inſtance of which we have in the 139th pſalm: but yet at the ſame time, the ſoul, if reconciled to God, cannot but rejoice that infinite power, juſtice and compaſſion, is always near, and every where controuls; ſhe cannot but call, like the Pſalmiſt, upon the multitude of the Iſles to rejoice, becauſe the Lord reigns.

But this is not the experience of thoſe who are diſaffected to the divine government, and whoſe tempers are contrary to holineſs. The preſence of a perſon, whoſe diſpoſition is the very reverſe of our own, is ſeldom welcome: It never can be ſo, if we know that he is alſo our enemy. Accordingly it is laid down in ſcripture as the characteriſtic of the wicked, that he has not God in all his thoughts. So far from endeavouring to realize this truth, he keeps it as far diſtant as poſſible; and if it forces itſelf upon him, his immediate care is, ſome how or other, to get clear of ſo diſagreeable a ſubject.

I have ſo far conſidered the ſanctification of the Lord in our hearts as implying—1ſt. The having true apprehenſions of God.—And 2dly. The having a realizing impreſſion of his exiſtence and preſence. There yet remains another particular ſo very eſſential to this duty, that let our conceptions of God be ever ſo true, and our ſenſe of his preſence and exiſtence ever ſo ſtrong, yet, without it, we cannot be ſaid to ſanctify the Lord in our hearts. It is this:

That we ſhould be well pleaſed that he is juſt ſuch a Being as he really is, or as Creation and Scripture declare him to be. It ſeems to be a very poſſible caſe, and likely is the caſe at preſent with fallen angels, and doubtleſs will be the caſe at the final judgment, both with them and wicked men, to have true notions of the character of God, and a moſt lively ſenſe

of his preſence; and yet ſo far from being pleaſed on this account, that it may be the occaſion of greater grief, uneaſineſs and terror; and ſo far from inducing to a ſanctification of the Lord in the heart, that it may occaſion a greater abhorrence and profanation of him by the wicked ſoul.

Our being well pleaſed with the character of God, with his laws and government, is certainly a ſure proof that the temper of our minds is changed from their natural enmity againſt God, that we have been renewed by the holy Spirit, and reconciled to him. And being reconciled to God, conſidering him as engaged on our ſide, and conſcious of his preſence and power, we will be naturally diſpoſed to confide in his almighty protection; and withſtand the ridicule, frowns and violence of men when interfering with duty. And doing this is certainly ſanctifying the Lord in our hearts, in the ſenſe of the text. As this belongs ſo eſſentially to the nature of the duty we are now conſidering; and as it is ſo ſure a criterion of the temper of our minds, and ſo of the ſtate of our ſouls, therefore the point ſhould be well conſidered. The important inquiry about the matter is this—how ſhall we determine whether we approve of the divine character or not! As God is inviſible, we may very readily miſtake his character; Our beſt way to know how we ſtand affected toward him, is to try how we are affected toward what reſembles him, or bears his image: and with which we are better acquainted.

Now this is the caſe with the law of God: I mean the moral law, or ten commandments, taken in that comprehenſive ſenſe, in which they are explained and enjoined in various parts of Scripture.

This law originates from God: it is ſtamped with his authority, and, I may ſay alſo, with his image, as it ſhews us what is his temper, if the expreſſion may be uſed, and how he is affected toward different objects, and what value and vileneſs they ſeverally bear in his ſight. If this law appears to us not good, or too extenſive in its demands, or too rigorous in its penalties, it is a ſure proof that we are not like God in our tempers, and that we do not view objects, and value them in the ſame manner he does; and conſequently do not approve of his conduct, and if not of his conduct, then not of his character or perfections, which diſpoſe him ſo to conduct. It

would be conſidered as a ſure proof that we were not well-affected toward a magiſtrate, if we diſliked his laws and adminiſtration. It is however much more certain, even infallible, with reſpect to the divine adminiſtration and laws. Human laws are not always an infallible criterion of the temper or character of the magiſtrate, or oſtenſible lawgiver, as not always reſulting immediately from his own wiſdom, inclination and will: but this is not the caſe with the divine law, which is the reſult of the holy and perfect nature of the lawgiver.

This approbation of the law does not conſiſt in an attachment to it as a mean by which we may avert the wrath of God, and purchaſe Heaven. This would prove us ignorant of the law, and oppoſed to the goſpel: ignorant of the extent and penalty of the one, and oppoſed to the whole ſcheme of the other. If holineſs be implanted, we will delight in the law, as being ſuited to our renewed nature; we will find conformity to it neceſſary to happineſs even for its own ſake, —that is, the law will not be merely a mean of acquiring happineſs, but it will be delighted in for its own ſake; and will be reſted in as an end. As authority for what has been ſaid reſpecting the law, and adminiſtration of God, we may mention how greatly David delighted in the law; how anxious he was for conformity to it, and how he rejoiced under the ſenſe of the divine government.

As the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is eſpecially the image of the inviſible God, as he is God himſelf manifeſted in the fleſh, we may certainly know how we are affected towards God, by conſidering how we are affected towards the Redeemer. It is not an uncommon thing to pretend to have a high regard for God, while Chriſt is neglected, or even contemned; at leaſt when no need of him is felt, and his mediation conſidered as uſeleſs. This is the caſe with thoſe rejectors of revelation, who ſtill hold to the exiſtence of a God. It was the caſe with the Jews in the time that the Redeemer ſojourned on our earth; and it is the caſe with them ſtill. But Chriſt admitted no ſuch pretenſions. He expreſsly told the Jews that if they rejected him, they rejected God; if they hated him, they hated his Father alſo. It is to be feared that this is the caſe with multitudes who bear the name of Chriſtians. They think they love God, though they feel no need of a Saviour;

and ſee no excellency in his perſon, through the effulgence of the divine glory: nor in the plan of ſalvation through him, though it is the higheſt diſplay of the wiſdom and power of God. The Apoſtle John in his firſt epiſtle declares, that if we have not the Son, we have not the Father; which is the ſame as ſaying, that if we regard not, love not the Son, we regard not, love not the Father; and conſequently do not ſanctify him in our hearts. In ſhort, all thoſe to whom Chriſt is as a root out of dry ground, without form or comelineſs; all thoſe who feel not their periſhing need of him in all his offices; who do not heartily approve of the way of ſalvation through him, are rejectors of Chriſt, and conſequently not friends to the divine character; and therefore ſanctify not the Lord in their hearts.

Thoſe of mankind who are believers in Chriſt, are called the children of God, and bear his image. By conſidering how we are affected towards them, we may be enabled to judge how we are affected towards God. We are told in the word of God, that—"If any man ſay, I have God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar."—Which is the ſame as ſaying, that if we do not love our Chriſtian brethren, we do but deceive ourſelves in thinking that we love God. Perhaps the way in which we ſtand affected to the people of God, is a much better proof of the temper of our hearts towards him, than is generally imagined. As God is inviſible, and our Saviour aſcended to heaven, we judge how we are affected towards them, by how we are affected by the deſcriptions of their character and perfections in the Scriptures. Now it ſeems poſſible for us, to be very much delighted with the deſcription of a perſon, and think that we admire and eſteem him very much, whereas, if we had lived and converſed with him, we would have very much diſliked and hated him. For inſtance,—the Jews had the writings and accounts of the prophets who had been put to death by their anceſtors; and in reading them, declared that they abhorred the conduct of their fathers, and that they would not have acted ſo, if they had then lived: whereas at the ſame time, they were hating, defaming and perſecuting thoſe who reſembled the prophets, viz. the diſciples of Chriſt, and him who was incomparably more excellent than any of the Prophets, even Chriſt himſelf. And we may obſerve the ſame kind of conduct in various periods of

the church, and even at the preſent time. The moſt bitter perſecutors of the Romiſh church pretended, and no doubt thought, that they highly venerated and loved the primitive martyrs, while they felt the greateſt rancour of heart againſt thoſe who moſt reſembled thoſe martyrs. At this time, zealous and godly miniſters and chriſtians, who have been dead for ſome conſiderable time, whoſe lives and writings are among us, are moſt highly extolled by many, who are at the ſame time oppoſing thoſe who are influenced by the ſame ſpirit. Hence we infer, that by conſidering how we are affected towards thoſe real chriſtians with whom we live and converſe, we may better determine the temper of our hearts, than by conſidering how we are affected by written accounts of holy men, or even of Chriſt himſelf. But in this matter we muſt be careful to take into conſideration, or make the trial by thoſe parts of the character of chriſtians in which they moſt reſemble God, and which are peculiar to them as his children; ſuch as their hatred againſt all ſin, love to holineſs, zeal for his glory and the ſalvation of ſouls; and alſo, that they do not confine the examination to a converſation or two, but to a courſe of intimacy and converſe.

Thus the conſideration how we are affected towards the law of God, the Son of God, and his people, may help us to determine how we are affected towards God himſelf, and whether we ſanctify him in our hearts. Before we leave this ſubject, it may be proper to conſider briefly an opinion ſtrenuouſly held by ſome, and connected to the matter in hand. It is this: That we cannot approve of the character of God, or in other words, love him, except we firſt believe that he is reconciled to us, or loves us. It is a point of the firſt importance, to know whether this opinion be true or falſe. The advocates of it hold that it is contrary to our very conſtitution, and therefore impoſſible that we ſhould love one whom we conſider as our enemy. Let us examine into this. Suppoſe a criminal arraigned before a judge, and that the judge was altogether diſintereſted in the caſe, further than a regard to juſtice and his duty: ſuppoſe the judge in the whole proceeding to ſhew himſelf actuated by a ſtrict regard to juſtice, and not by any private grudge or malice, and that he ſhewed as much tenderneſs to the criminal as the law would at all permit him: and ſuppoſe further that all this was noticed by

the criminal: would it then ſeem impoſſible in the very nature of things, upon the ſuppoſition that he was condemned, for him to approve, and reſpect, and even to love his judge? It certainly does not. All that, at the moſt, is neceſſary, is that he ſhould be a reaſonable perſon, and of a good diſpoſition. Now let us apply this to the caſe of God and ourſelves. Upon the ſuppoſition that he is not reconciled to us, and paſſes ſentence of condemnation againſt us, yet in all this he acts only the part of the moſt diſintereſted judge. He is actuated ſolely by a regard to juſtice, and is at the moſt diſtant remove from any thing like private grudge or animoſity. Our wickedneſs or our righteouſneſs may benefit or irritate a creature like ourſelves, but God is infinitely above them. The law alſo by which we are judged, is a holy, juſt and good law; and the whole proceeding is tempered with infinite benevolence. Now what reaſon is there that we ſhould not look upon this moſt equitable conduct of our judge with approbation? He does us no injuſtice,—not the leaſt wrong; and this his conduct will receive the approbation and the hoſannahs of all holy beings. We certainly would do it, if our tempers and hearts were right; nothing elſe is wanting. Now to this right temper of mind every believer is brought by regeneration. The ſoul is then brought to conſider God in a right point of view; to conſider him as the moſt equitable, benevolent judge, and the rule of judgment to be holy, juſt and good. Now ſuppoſe a perſon under the influence of this right temper, and theſe right views of the perfections of God, does it ſeem an impoſſibility in the very nature of things, for him to approve of God, or to love him, except he thinks that God has pardoned him, and loves him? So far is it from this, that under the influence of this right temper, and theſe right views of the perfections of God, he cannot help but love God, though he ſhould ſuppoſe himſelf ſtill in a ſtate of condemnation. At leaſt, we are juſtified in drawing this concluſion from every ſuppoſition we can make how reaſonable and holy beings would be affected in ſuch a caſe.

But to conclude this head; the ſum of what has been ſaid reſpecting the ſanctification of the Lord in our hearts, is that in order thereto we muſt have true apprehenſions of God, as he has revealed himſelf in his works and his word: we muſt firmly believe his exiſtence as ſuch, and realize his preſence:

and laſtly, it muſt be pleaſing to us, even our rejoicing, that he is ſuch as his word declares him to be, and that he reigns.

Let us now conſider the reaſons why we ſhould thus ſanctify the Lord in our hearts.

Now it is neceſſary that the people of God ſhould comply with this duty, that they may comfortably, ſteadily and perſeveringly purſue the ſervice of God and the way to heaven.—In the times of the apoſtles and many other periods, the ſtorm of perſecution blew hard; at other times the warm ſunſhine of proſperity proves no leſs inimical; thus both the frowns and ſmiles of the world oppoſe the chriſtian; and in compliance with this duty he will be able to withſtand both.

A compliance with this duty is neceſſary to every one in the ſame manner as ſalvation is neceſſary. For the ſanctification of the Lord in the manner explained, is eſſentially included in faith, repentance, and holineſs, all of which are neceſſary to ſalvation, not in a way of merit, but in a way of order and fitneſs, and divine appointment.

I ſhall now proceed to conſider the ſecond duty enjoined in the text; that is, to *be ready to give an anſwer to every man that aſketh the reaſon of the hope that is in us, with meekneſs and fear.*

And here three points ariſe to view:

1ſt. What we are to underſtand by the queſtion—

2dly. What we ſhould anſwer, and how we ſhould anſwer this queſtion—and

3dly. The reaſons why we ſhould be ready thus to anſwer the queſtion. And in this order I ſhall treat the ſubject.

If a perſon were to aſk another at this time a reaſon of the hope that is in him, we would naturally ſuppoſe that he wanted to know the evidences the other had for thinking himſelf a real chriſtian. But if we conſider the occaſion and connection of the words, we cannot think that this was the only or main deſign of them, as uſed by the apoſtle. He was particularly addreſſing perſecuted chriſtians. They on the account of their withdrawing from the religion of their fathers and their country, and forſaking their idolatrous rites, cuſtoms and immoral practices, and declaring that theſe were wicked and abominable, ſoon became objects of public attention. Their ſingular conduct and ſtill more ſingular belief, excited the indignation and malice of the more intereſted, as the prieſt and

the magiſtrate; the contempt and the ridicule of thoſe eſteemed the wiſe and the learned, and the attention and wonder of all. Hence they would be often called upon to aſſign a reaſon for their peculiar conduct and opinions; not unfrequently indeed they were dragged before magiſtrates and public officers, and ordered to give an account, or aſſign a reaſon for their relinguiſhing the gods and religious ſentiments of the country. Now we believe this to be preciſely the inquiry to which the apoſtle directs the primitive chriſtians to be ready to give an anſwer with meekneſs and fear. We would not, however, exclude the former meaning as if it were not at all included in the words; and the leſs ſo as in many caſes the two queſtions include each other, or become the ſame. For inſtance, if a heathen, an infidel, or a Jew were to aſk the queſtion of us, their meaning would generally be, what reaſons we have to think Chriſtianity to be true, or a revelation from God.—But if a profeſſor of religion were to make the inquiry, his meaning would be, what reaſons we had to think ourſelves real chriſtians. Now our beſt reaſon for believing the ſcriptures to be true, is our experiencing their influence upon our own ſouls, in which alſo conſiſts our beſt, or rather only evidences that we are real chriſtians; though this would not always be the moſt proper anſwer to the former, as we will endeavour preſently to ſhew.

Having thus endeavoured to explain the meaning of the queſtion, we come now to conſider the anſwer proper to be given.

We ſay in the general, that the anſwer ſhould not always be the ſame, but ſhould vary with the character and circumſtances of the perſon putting the queſtion. As a proof of this we have the example of Paul. In anſwering for himſelf and the religion he profeſſed, before Agrippa and the Jews, and before the learned and idolatrous Athenians, he makes uſe of very different arguments, and goes upon very different grounds. When before Agrippa, who had been educated in the Jewiſh religion, and who was acquainted with the ſtate of the Chriſtians, and the grounds of diſpute between them and the Jews, he gives a particular narrative of that very wonderful way how he came to be changed from a bigoted phariſee, and cruel perſecutor, to be one of the moſt zealous advocates for the Chriſtian religion. Nothing could be more proper,

conſidering the circumſtances he was then in. But when at Athens, addreſſing that learned, polite, but ſuperſtitious people, who knew nothing about him, the Jews, or the Chriſtians, the diſcourſe which in the former circumſtances was ſo proper, would have been moſt improper, as they would have immediately ſuppoſed him ſome hot-headed enthuſiaſt, led about by the wanderings of his own imagination. Accordingly we find him proceeding in a quite different manner with them: he calls their attention to thoſe principles of natural religion which were eaſily deducible from the works of creation, and to thoſe obvious truths which are engraven on the mind and conſcience, and thence conducts them to the peculiarities of the goſpel. This is the pattern at which miniſters ſhould aim. If a miniſter of the goſpel ſhould be aſked a reaſon of the hope that is in him by a Jew, he would have to make the Old Teſtament a medium of argument, and from it to prove that our Saviour was the true Meſſiah or Chriſt, and that it was in vain to look for another,—or in ſome ſuch manner. Again; if he were aſked the queſtion by an Infidel or Deiſt, his anſwer ſhould be entirely different. He would have to reſort to thoſe excellent defences of Chriſtianity, written in anſwer to modern Infidels, with which at preſent we are ſo well ſupplied. If the queſtion were put by a Mahometan or Idolater, a new ground would have to be taken with each. I preſume not to point out preciſely the anſwers which ſhould be given in ſuch caſes, but only ſomething in general, to ſhew that the anſwers muſt be different. The man of God, however, ſhould go to the field ſo thoroughly furniſhed with ſpiritual armour, as to be able to repel the attack in whatever quarter it came. Let us now ſuppoſe the queſtion put by ſome acquaintance, in whom we placed confidence, or ſome ſerious inquirer, who might have doubts about religion in general, or about which denomination of Chriſtians was moſt in the right. In ſuch a caſe it would ſeem proper to mention to them the experience of his own heart, and thence to ſhew them what good reaſons he had to believe that there was a reality and power in religion. I ſay there does not ſeem any impropriety in making this anſwer to any perſon whom we knew was friendly and ſerious in his inquiry. Let us now conſider another caſe which ſometimes occurs. Suppoſe a perſon who had been remarkably oppoſed to religion, or re-

markably profligate in his manners, to be made a ſubject of diſtinguiſhing mercy and love; inſtances of which we ſometimes ſee; how ſhould he anſwer to his former intimates looking for a reaſon of his change of conduct? Should he tell all his experience, or ſhould he tell none? Perhaps it would be beſt to proceed ſomething in this manner:—He might appeal to their own knowledge how thoroughly he had tried the pleaſures in which they were engaged, and declare unto them how little ſatisfaction he had experienced: he might appeal unto them if this were not the caſe, and if it were not reaſonable to try another courſe when the preſent one proved ſo void of comfort: he might declare that he had made the change, and tried religion what it would do; and in doing this he had met with ſources of ſatisfaction before altogether unknown; that under the influence of religion he could feel content and happy when all the world frowned; that under the influence of this, the bed of ſickneſs became ſofter than the bed of health without it; that even death loſt its terrors, and became a mild meſſenger of peace. In ſome ſuch manner as this he might expreſs himſelf to their conviction, without in the leaſt expoſing himſelf or the honour of religion.

Let us now conſider a little how this anſwer ſhould be made. The text tells us: *with meekneſs and fear.* That is, without the deſign or the appearance of inſult or oſtentation, which would render our anſwer uſeleſs, or worſe than uſeleſs. We not unfrequently meet with ſtrong advocates for religion, who by dogmatical aſſertions, their oſtentatious way, their impatience of contradiction, and their deſire of victory, do more hurt than ſervice to the cauſe they advocate. Such perſons do moſt pointedly tranſgreſs the direction in the text, and at the ſame time ſhew the propriety of it. If we would wiſh our defences of religion to be availing we muſt feel and ſhew a ſpirit of meekneſs, and a real regard to the perſon whom we would wiſh to convince. Alſo in telling what has been experienced in the heart, or what great things God has done for the ſoul, we often ſee a very great abuſe by not attending to the direction of the Apoſtle, that it ſhould be done with meekneſs and fear. In ſuch a country as this, where religious characters are honoured, experiences may be told from a deſire to gain applauſe. They thus become fuel to pride, and in the end may occaſion a perſon to be left to himſelf, and to

fall, to the great diſgrace of himſelf, and the great diſhonour of religion.

I ſhall now a little conſider the third point propoſed,—the reaſons why we ſhould be ready to give an anſwer. And we ſhould do this for the vindication of ourſelves, ſhewing that we were not actuated by obſtinacy, a contempt of others, or a mere deſire to be ſingular, but had important reaſons for our conduct; and declaring this with meekneſs and fear, would have a direct tendency to diſarm the rage of oppoſers. It would alſo tend to our advantage, in letting our hearts be known to a pious friend. We ſhould attend to this duty for the benefit of others, as it would tend to their conviction and ſalvation;—the dying confeſſions of martyrs have been frequently bleſſed to this purpoſe.

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On MORAL TASTE.

BY moral taſte is here meant a diſpoſition of mind, or preparation of the heart, to reliſh, or be diſguſted with moral ſubjects. An attempt will be made to ſhew that there is ſomething in the human mind, of a moral nature, which bears a reſemblance to the appetites of the body, by which men have a preparation to be pleaſed or diſpleaſed with certain kinds of food, fruits or liquors.

Moral ſubjects admit only of moral evidence, and not of mathematical demonſtration; and when they are of an abſtruſe nature, fixed attention and careful illuſtration are neceſſary, that their evidence may be clearly manifeſted and ſuitably impreſſed. The ſubject to be now conſidered, being of this nature, it is propoſed to give a ſhort diſſertation on the taſte or appetites of the body, which may illuſtrate and aſſiſt in inquiring into the moral taſte.

1. The univerſal experience and obſervation of mankind render it manifeſt, that people are pleaſed by taſting certain kinds of food and fruits, and are diſguſted with other kinds. Different men are pleaſed and diſguſted with different things; ſo that what is agreeable to one is loathſome to another, and what one regards with indifference, is exquiſitely reliſhed by

his neighbour. This alſo takes place among animals of every ſpecies; ſo that they chooſe different kinds of food. Something ſimilar operates as really in ſmelling and in hearing, as in taſting. And from a like cauſe people are led to prefer different employments, company and amuſements. And this is ſo powerful, that thoſe things which highly entertain ſome, do as ſtrongly diſguſt others.

2. Experience and obſervation equally prove that the affections of being pleaſed or diſguſted by certain things, are in a degree permanent, and continue the ſame for years together, and frequently through life, when thoſe things are applied to the taſte; and that they never can be contemplated without ſome degree of deſire or abhorrence, accordingly as the taſte is a preparation to be pleaſed or offended by them. There is however many times a gradual, and ſometimes, by ſome ſpecial cauſe, a ſudden change, by which ſome things which once pleaſed diſguſt, and which once diſguſted pleaſe; and when the change has taken place, it continues as permanent as other appetites.—From theſe conſiderations it ſeems to be evident, that there is a certain preparation in the organs of taſte, ſmell, &c. to be pleaſed or diſpleaſed with certain objects of ſenſe; becauſe, wherever theſe objects are preſented, they uniformly produce thoſe effects, unleſs ſome powerful cauſe prevents them. And this preparation of palate is by common conſent called the taſte or appetite. And men ſay, 'They always have an appetite for theſe things.'—The word taſte is alſo uſed in a ſtill more extenſive ſenſe, and we ſpeak of a taſte, not only for food, but for muſic, company, polite accompliſhments, hiſtory and many other things; meaning a preparation to be pleaſed with them, and ſuch a preparation as remains through life, or for a long time, and is proved by the uniform effects which they produce on every occaſion, when thoſe things occur.

3. This preparation to be ſo pleaſed or diſpleaſed, tho' it remains in the palate continually, is never in exerciſe, unleſs the particular food or fruits, which excite pleaſure or diſpleaſure, are taſted, ſeen or at leaſt thought of. The appetite, or preparation of the organs of taſte lies dormant, and gives one no deſire, pleaſure, pain or other affection, until called into action by the ſubject by which it is prepared to be affected.

4. When the object of the appetite is preſented, then it acts, if nothing interferes, in proportion to its ſtrength and the nearneſs of the object. If we but barely think of the object, the appetite may be but little affected. If in addition to this we expect to enjoy it ſoon, the appetite is ſtill more affected. If it be bro't in ſight, prepared to be eaten, if it be ſmelt and contemplated with undivided attention, there is a great affection of the organs of taſte, and the deſire is powful. But it is only when actually received that the ſenſation is moſt exquiſite. The appetite therefore is diſtinct from actually taſting the object, and from the pleaſure or diſguſt it produces. It is the preparation, and theſe are the affections of the appetite.

5. There may be an appetite for two kinds of fruit, and the appetite for one may be much ſtronger than for the other. If both ſhould be preſented at the ſame time, and but one could be obtained, a decided preference might be given to the one, becauſe organs of taſte are adapted to be more exquiſitely affected by one than by the other. Let one be a pomegranate and the other an orange, and I am unable to purchaſe but one. I ſhould without heſitation purchaſe the pomegranate, for the ſake of its taſte, if both were preſented at the ſame time. But I have a deſire for the orange alſo, and if I had the means, I would gladly procure both, and ſhould eat both with pleaſure.

In certain circumſtances however, my appetite would lead me to purchaſe the orange, in preference to the pomegranate. Let the orange be now preſent, and the pomegranate cannot be obtained within an hour: It is out of ſight, tho' ſoon expected; but the orange is before me, I ſee it, I ſmell it, I contemplate it, my appetite is powerfully excited. But the pomegranate being at a diſtance, and unſeen, has much leſs effect on the appetite, and hence, after ſome debate with my judgment, which would direct me to wait an hour for the pomegranate, that would afford more pleaſure in the iſſue, I purchaſe however, from preſent appetite, the orange. This is according to the known properties of the appetites.

Mankind are agreed in acknowledging the exiſtence of ſuch appetites; and it is reaſonable from the uniform effects of their objects, to conſider them permanent, tho' often dor-

mant, the effects cannot in any other way be rationally accounted for.

Therefore, if there be ſomething in the moral affections of the mind, ſimilar to thoſe of the body in all theſe particulars, it is conceived, that it would be unreaſonable to deny the exiſtence of a moral appetite, taſte, diſpoſition or preparation to be pleaſed or diſpleaſed with moral ſubjects, according to the nature of the taſte. Let this reſemblance or analogy be conſidered.

1. Univerſal experience and obſervation make it manifeſt, that certain men appear to be pleaſed with the doctrines of the goſpel, with the law of God, and with his ſupremacy in the exerciſe of univerſal providence; and that others are diſpleaſed with theſe things. This is alſo agreeable to the holy ſcriptures, which teach us, that men either love God or are at enmity againſt him.

2. Obſervation and experience prove, that theſe affections of being pleaſed or diſpleaſed with God, and his government, are in a degree permanent, and continue, ſo as to form the general characters of men; and that they uſually take place, whenever theſe moral ſubjects are ſtrongly impreſſed upon and realized by the mind. With reference to this, the holy ſcriptures denominate ſome men the friends, and ſome the enmies of God. His friends have alſo a fixed abhorrence of ſin, and his enemies delight in it. This is fully illuſtrated in the different characters of men, given for our inſtruction, in the word of God.

Among his friends, ſome are more uſually, or more ſtrongly affected with one, and ſome with another part of his diſpenſations, as his law, his goſpel or his providence; and have a correſpondent ſet of exerciſes and duties, by which ſome become more eſpecially exemplary in one part of Chriſtian duties and exerciſes, and ſome in another. In the ſame manner, ſome who love ſin, are given to detraction, others to covetouſneſs, intemperance, profaneneſs, or perſecution of the people of God; and theſe propenſities become characteriſtic of them. Theſe are as evidential of a permanent taſte or preparation of mind to be affected with pleaſure or pain by moral objects, as the analogous affections are of the natural taſte or appetites of the body. It is rational to conſider them as the neceſſary effects of moral taſte; and they can be ra-

tionally accounted for in this way, and in no other. It is alſo true, that ſometimes theſe moral affections are ſuddenly changed, as in the caſe of Saul of Tarſus, and of the three thouſand at the memorable day of Pentecoſt; and then contrary affections become permanent, which proves what the ſcriptures call a change of heart; and is the ſame that is meant by a change of moral taſte or diſpoſition of the mind towards ſuch things, and is as evident as the change of bodily appetites. This moral taſte is different from moral affections, and is the cauſe of them, or the preparation for them; and ſtands in nearly the ſame relation to the affections, as the will does to its volitions, except that the taſte governs both the affections, and the will, with its volitions.

3. This preparation to be pleaſed or offended with moral things, which we call the taſte or the heart, or the diſpoſition of mind, (for theſe are ſynonimous words,) tho' by continual and repeated obſervations, it is found to remain conſtantly in the mind, is never in exerciſe, unleſs thoſe moral objects with which it is prepared to be delighted or diſguſted, are preſented to its view. The taſte or heart lies dormant, as to theſe things, and produces no exerciſes of the affections, is neither pleaſed or offended, until called into action by the contemplation of the object with which it is prepared to be affected, that is by moral things. Thus the wiſe virgins often ſlumber and ſleep.

4. When the divine character, or the object of the taſte is preſented, then it acts in proportion to its ſtrength, the nearneſs of the object, and its being contemplated and realized with undivided attention. If the true character of God be bro't into view, and be ſeriouſly conſidered, and the relations in which we ſtand to him and his government, appear real and intereſting, there will be a great affection of love or enmity, according to the nature of the heart or taſte. And hence it is that the people of God are exceedingly bleſſed in beholding him, and his enemies become exaſperated to madneſs, when God and his government are brought clearly into view. This was the caſe under the miniſtry of Chriſt and his apoſtles, whom they perſecuted with extreme violence.

5. There may be, and there is in believers while in this world, two taſtes, reſpecting moral ſubjects, in direct oppoſition to each other; one is pleaſed with holineſs, and the other with the objects of ſinful pleaſure. In the holy ſcriptures

theſe are diſtinguiſhed by the law of the mind, and the law in the members, or the new heart and the carnal heart. "I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is preſent with me: for I delight in the law of God, after the inward man; but I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin, which is in my members. So then, with my mind, I myſelf ſerve the law of God; but with the fleſh, the law of ſin."—In all true believers the holy taſte is ſtronger than the ſinful one, or the ſupreme object in which it delights is ſo infinitely ſuperior to all the objects which pleaſe the carnal taſte, that if both were felt and realized by the mind, at the ſame time, and in the ſame degree, a decided preference would always be given in favour of holineſs; for the mind is prepared to be more exquiſitely delighted with God than with any ſinful gratifications. "Thou art my portion O Lord."

But in certain circumſtances, believers do actually ſerve ſin, and the ſinful taſte prevails. At ſuch times, ſome object, calculated to inflame the ſinful taſte, is preſent—is contemplated—the imagination fired and the taſte ſtrongly excited, and God is either not thought of at all, or his glory is little contemplated; and in this way the ſinful taſte hurries the man into evil exerciſes. Thus David had his perverſe inclination or taſte inflamed, while God was out of view; ſo that he did very great wickedneſs. But when he reflected upon his ſin in the preſence of God, he was filled with anguiſh of ſpirit; and ſaid, 'My bones waxed old thro' my roaring all the day long'—'Make me to hear joy and gladneſs. that the bones which thou has broken may rejoice.'

In all theſe particulars, the affections of the mind are analogous to thoſe of the palate; and it is thought, do as fully prove a moral taſte, which is the foundation of moral affections or exerciſes, as the others prove an appetite, which is the foundation of the pleaſure or diſguſt, which certain kinds of food or fruits give to men and other animals.

Beſides: It is thought, that this idea of a moral taſte, diſtinct from moral exerciſes, and the foundation of them, is ſupported by the holy ſcriptures. Our Lord ſays, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good, or elſe make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt, for the tree is known by his fruit." And again he ſays, "Ye ſhall know them by their

fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles? A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." The tree is here deſigned to repreſent the moral quality of the man, or his preparation for good or evil exerciſes, and the fruit, to repreſent theſe exerciſes, as appears by their connection. In one inſtance, the tree is mentioned as a mark to diſtinguiſh falſe prophets, and in the other, it is explained by the following words. "A good man, out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treaſure, bringeth forth evil things." Theſe words teach us, that there is the ſame preparation in the heart to produce particular moral exerciſes, good or evil, as in a tree to produce good or evil fruit; that the heart or taſte is as diſtinct from its affections or exerciſes, as the tree from its fruit; and that the exerciſes of the heart do as certainly and as neceſſarily correſpond with it nature, as the fruits do with the nature of the tree.

The ſcriptures frequently uſe the word *heart* in the ſame ſenſe, ſignifying the moral taſte. They mention a ſtony heart, an heart of fleſh, a new heart, an honeſt and good heart, a clean heart, an hard heart and a carnal heart, in ſuch a way as ſeem neceſſarily to imply a preparation or taſte for holy or unholy exerciſes. They alſo expreſſly diſtinguiſh between the heart and its exerciſes. They mention the deſires of the heart an heart which worketh iniquity, and an heart that believeth. It is thought that this proves, that by the heart, when uſed in this manner, we are to underſtand a moral taſte or diſpoſition.

Again: That men have a moral taſte, and by nature a corrupt moral taſte, appears to be more fully confirmed by the conſideration, that mankind univerſally begin their lives with evil exerciſes; and unleſs renewed by the Holy Ghoſt, they are wholly given to ſin, at all times, and on all occaſions, which is a ſcripture doctrine. When the chain of their moral exerciſes is diſturbed by the moſt ſurpriſing incidents, or ſuſpended and broken off by ſleep, or diverted from one object to another, in an infinite variety of ways, ſtill "Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only evil continually." This is naturally accounted for, or the idea that they have an evil heart or taſte, which is a continual preparation to love ſin and hate holineſs, and that they have no other moral inclination; and that this remains independent of moral exerciſes,

and the foundation, faculty or principle of them; for in this caſe, the tree muſt always bring forth ſuch fruit, or the heart ſuch exerciſes. But if no ſuch corrupt taſte or bias be ſuppoſed, recourſe muſt be had to ſome hypotheſis more unnatural, and different from the ordinary method of divine operations, by which God brings about events by natural or moral cauſes, ſometimes called the laws of nature. And this hypotheſis muſt alſo contradict the ſcripture repreſentations, of corrupt ſtreams, depending on a corrupt fountain, for their evil quality. It is believed, that this is no ſmall evidence of a moral taſte, and of one which is corrupt.

Further: It is believed, that the ſcripture repreſentation of regeneration brings a ſerious argument, in proof of the exiſtence of a moral taſte. Regeneration is a change from ſin to holineſs. In effecting this, God takes away the heart of ſtone, and gives an heart of fleſh. It is an event never repeated in the ſame perſon. In giving the new heart, God is repreſented as doing ſomething for a man, which he never does again, and which is different from the ordinary operations of his ſpirit, in carrying on the work of ſanctification.—And this correſponds with the idea, that regeneration is the communication of an holy taſte which begins to exterminate the original corrupt taſte. And all that the ſcriptures ſay of regeneration is intelligible in this view; for that taſte is permanent, and whenever it is excited by contemplating God and the things which it reliſhes, will put forth holy affections.—But were we to diſbelieve any ſuch thing as an holy taſte, and ſuppoſe the heart to be nothing but a ſimilar chain of moral exerciſes, we muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe, that there is nothing ſpecial in regeneration, different in kind, from that which takes place at any other time, when God is pleaſed to create an holy exerciſe in the ſoul, after it had been employed in ſinful exerciſes; which ſeems to be contrary to the repreſentation, which the ſcriptures give us, of the importance, and eſpecially of the particular nature of regeneration.

The idea of moral taſte, as it has been explained, is alſo in perfect conformity to that which the ſcriptures aſſert concerning two oppoſite laws, or propenſities in the Chriſtian. The old one is but in part taken away in this life, and a new one is created.—This will therefore reaſonably account for the inconſtancy of believers. When objects adapted to pleaſe

either taſte are brought near and contemplated, that taſte prevails for the time. And the whole is perfectly intelligible, which otherwiſe would be a myſtery. For Chriſtians are conſcious of one, and ſometimes of an oppoſite claſs of moral exerciſes, as according to the idea of a moral taſte, they muſt be, when the objects which pleaſe either taſte are out of view.

Moreover: The view we have taken of the ſubject is calculated to impreſs on the mind the importance of the numerous directions, which God has given us, to avoid temptations, and to pray that we be not led into them; which would not appear ſo evidently important, if we rejected the idea of a moral taſte or diſpoſition of mind. It peculiarly ſhows us the importance of avoiding the company and evil communications of the wicked, of meditating on the law of God, and keeping the heart with all diligence. For according to the idea that Chriſtians have two oppoſite moral taſtes or inclinations, which are excited and put in action by the objects which are ſuited to give them delight reſpectively, it is evidently of great conſequence to make a covenant with our eyes and with all our ſenſes, not to preſent us with the objects ſuited to inflame the ſinful taſte; and that we do not ſuffer them to work upon our imaginations, leſt they hurry us into ſin. And it is equally neceſſary, that we keep thoſe things in view continually, which pleaſe the holy taſte; that we may have holy affections, and be in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Thus we may ſet the Lord always before us, and ponder the path of life.

Beſides: As the appetites of the body are weakened by long abſence of their objects, and men become gradually weaned from them, and as they are ſtrengthened by frequent gratification; ſo avoiding temptations and ſinful indulgences tends to weaken and ſubdue the corrupt taſte, and wean us from ſin; and the conſtant ſenſe of the perfections of God, and the exerciſe of gracious affections naturally tend to ſtrengthen an holy diſpoſition or taſte. Theſe conſiderations ſhould engage us to follow the directions we have received, to avoid temptation, and ſet the Lord always before us. The way to conquer is to fly. And it is in obedience and the uſe of means directed, that we are to expect that God will work in us, both to will and to do, by his ſpecial grace. In this

way we are to give all diligence to make our calling and election ſure.

Further: The view now taken of this ſubject peculiarly helps us to underſtand, how it is, that the truths revealed in the ſcriptures are the food of the ſaints. They grow by the ſincere milk of the word, and are edified by the uſe of all Chriſtian inſtitutions. Theſe things excite holy affections in thoſe who have an upright heart or moral taſte, ſtrengthen it, call off the heart from objects of ſinful deſire, ſhew how evil and unſatisfying they are, and wean the heart from them. We have occaſion to admire the mercy of God in the gift of his word and inſtitutions, which ſo often call our minds off from the objects which inflame the ſinful taſte, to meditate on thoſe which captivate an holy inclination. Thus we have the ſabbath weekly, and daily calls to family and cloſet prayer; and are taught to addreſs God whenever we ſit down to our food, often to read the ſcriptures, attend the religious inſtruction of children, and aſſociate with the people of God. Theſe things feed the people of God, recover them from temptations, habituate them to holy exerciſes, and ſo weaken the power of the corrupt, and ſtrengthen the good diſpoſition. And accordingly, where theſe helps are not enjoyed, or are too much neglected, Chriſtians are ſenſible of ſpiritual decay. This alſo may be conſidered as another evidence of the reality of moral taſte.

Again: If there be an holy taſte, then believers will hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs and if an evil one, then the wicked will have their minds on thoſe gratifications which ſuit their taſte, and will be tempted and drawn away by their own luſts, juſt as we find by ſcripture, experience and obſervation that they are; which, while it brings another evidence of a moral taſte, at the ſame time, calls us to examine ourſelves, and inſtructs us by what means we may know our own hearts, even by their fruits.

Finally: Men muſt be born again. We need good hearts, and a good heart or moral preparation is indeed an excellent treaſure; agreeable to the inſtruction of our Lord, "A good man, out of the good treaſure of the heart, bringeth forth good things."

CARDIA.

[*From the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine.*]

TO PARENTS AND HEADS OF FAMILIES,

Who are living in the daily neglect of Family Prayer, and the religious inſtruction of their Children.

DEAR FRIENDS,

AN ardent deſire for your preſent and future welfare and felicity, as well as the happineſs of your dear children and families, the peace, order and well being of ſociety in general, with which you ſtand connected, together with an honeſt deſire (as I humbly hope) of promoting in ſome ſmall degree the cauſe of true piety and the religion of our divine Redeemer—have induced me to addreſs a few lines to you on the ſubject of family prayer and inſtruction. My wiſh and deſign in this attempt is to convince you, my dear friends, that while you live in the neglect of a duty ſo plain and ſo important, you have but too much reaſon to conclude that you have no true religion; that you are living without hope and without God in the world; and having no religion to ſolace you while paſſing through life, what will ſupport or comfort you in the gloomy vale of death? When your fleſh and your heart ſhall fail you, to whom will you look for help—on whom will you depend for ſafety and deliverance? Such perſons as are parents and heads of families, and who of courſe have the care of children and their education committed to them, have a duty of vaſt importance reſting on them. They will do well to conſider that the care not only of their bodies, but alſo of their dear, immortal, undying ſpirits is committed to them; and that while they provide every thing neceſſary for their temporal and bodily ſupport and comfort, but neglect the care of their ſouls, they perform the ſmalleſt, incomparably the ſmalleſt part of the duty which they owe to their dear offſpring.—The inſtruction of children in the duties, and in the nature and reaſonableneſs of religion, is vaſtly important; and thoſe who would faithfully and ſucceſsfully diſcharge the duty, will be very careful and conſcientious therein. They will not only teach them by pious precepts, but alſo by pious examples; for in vain will be your pious inſtruction if not enforced by religious examples.

Should you be aſked whether you love your children, you would be ſurpriſed and almoſt grieved at ſo ſtrange an enquiry; but, my dear friends, let me aſk you whether that love and affection which appears to extend no farther than to the bodies and the temporal concerns of your children, while that which concerns them, and their tender, anxious parents more than ten thouſand worlds, is wholy neglected—can with any propriety be called genuine and true love? I think it cannot; but I muſt requeſt you to conſider it ſeriouſly, and with the attention which the nature and importance of the ſubject demand.

Thoſe parents who live from day to day, and from year to year, in the neglect of family prayer and inſtruction, are not only omitting an important duty which they ought to perform, but are teaching their dear children by their own fatal example, more emphatically and more perſuaſively than by the moſt concluſive reaſoning, that ſuch prayer and ſuch inſtruction are wholly unneceſſary.—Permit me to requeſt you to conſider further, what is the tendency of this example which you ſet; is it not to render your own hearts more obdurate and inſenſible, and your own minds more blind to your own eternal concerns? But does the evil tendency ſtop here? Will not your example ſerve to encourage others, your neighbours and acquaintance, in the neglect of their duty, by which you bring a double guilt on yourſelves.—But above all, how awfully does it tend to beget in the minds of your dear offſpring a diſbelief and total neglect of all religion, and of all the duties of it; and to caſt away and deny all moral obligation? And, my dear friends, what a gloomy proſpect does this afford us as it reſpects poſterity! How ſoon and with what rapid ſtrides will your children deſcend to a ſtate of heatheniſm, and become nothing better than Pagan idolaters! —Much remains to be ſaid on this intereſting ſubject, by way of argument, to convince all thoſe who need conviction, of the reaſonableneſs, obligation and utility of the duty; and in anſwering objections, or enquires which it is poſſible ſome may be diſpoſed to make, plain and reaſonable as the duty appears to be; but as I intended no more than to ſuggeſt a few of the leading ideas, in hopes that ſome abler hand might be induced to take up the ſubject, and enlarge upon it as its importance demands, I ſhall cloſe my remarks by wiſhing the

divine efficiency may accompany every effort, however feeble towards enlightening the ignorant, bringing to ſerious conſideration ſuch as are thoughtleſs, and living ſecurely in the neglect of religious duties, whoſe doom, if they continue thus to live, and ſo leave the world, will be awful indeed! Which may GOD of his infinite mercy prevent, for the ſake of a merciful Redeemer.

[*From the London Evangelical Magazine.*]

AN ADDRESS
TO SLEEPERS IN THE HOUSE OF GOD.

CHILDREN of ſloth! Your crimes need not be proved—you are your own accuſers; and, as though you gloried in your ſhame, you are repeatedly expoſing yourſelves to freſh guilt and diſgrace before many witneſſes. Hardened in your ſin, neither the voice of the preacher, the ſubject of his miniſtry, the eyes of ſpectators, nor the preſence of the GREAT GOD himſelf have hitherto reſtrained you! Suffer one among the many, whoſe grief and indignation your inexcuſeable indolence repeatedly provokes, and whoſe devotional pleaſures it interrupts, to addreſs you in the language of faithful remonſtrance.

What mean ye, O Sleepers! by chooſing the *day of God* above all others, for a day of ſlumber, and the *time of his worſhip* above all other, for ſlothful indulgence? Have ye not houſes and couches to ſleep in at home, that you muſt convert your pews into bed-chambers? Are there no ſeaſons of repoſe you can enjoy beſide, that you muſt chooſe thoſe which are conſecrated to God? O Sleepers! know, that every pillow in your habitations unites with every ſetting ſun, to leave your ſlumbers in the ſanctuary without excuſe.

Or will ye find that excuſe in the *nature of the ſervice?*—Will you plead that the Goſpel of Chriſt is a thing ſo unintereſting, or devotional exerciſes ſo ſtupifying, that in vain you endeavour to preſerve your attention to them? Ah think, what a teſtimony ſuch a plea will bear to the extreme *hardneſs and carnality of your own hearts.* What *can* engage your attention, if a God incarnate, ſhedding his pre-

cious blood for guilty men, cannot? What ſubject ſo intereſting as this, or what more deſerving your regard!

When the Redeemer expired, the rocks trembled—the earth ſhook—the graves opened—the dead aroſe—the ſun hid his beams, and a Centurion exclaimed, "this is the Son of God!" But you—harder than the rock—more ſtupid than the earth—more unfeeling than the grave, or the dead carcaſes it contains, can preſent, to a diſguſted aſſembly, a yawning countenance at that very ſcene which made the lamp of heaven aſhamed to appear before an admiring world, and tacitly declare, that an idolatrous Gentile ſoldier felt more like a Chriſtian than yourſelves.

But you profeſs to be *Chriſtians*, and would be offended with the man who ſhould call your piety in queſtion. Is this then the evidence you give of it, and are theſe the fruits by which we muſt judge of your religion? Enter the moſque of a Muſſelman—the pagod of an Indian, or the ſynagogue of a Jew, and, if you are ingenuous enough to draw a fair inference, confeſs, that if *attention* be the criterion, they are better worſhippers than you. Yes it is the infamy of *Chriſtian aſſemblies*, above all others, to diſhonour their religion, belie their profeſſion, and inſult their God! And at your door, O Sleepers! that infamy lies.

Where is your reſpect for your Miniſter? For ſix days he labours, and on the ſeventh he brings into the pulpit what he has in ſecret prepared. Unhappy man! Thy hearers tell thee to thy face that thy labours for a week are not worthy their attention for an hour. O how often has it been, that when the faithful, zealous man of God has had his heart warmed with his ſubject, and has fondly thought each attendant's feelings were in uniſon with his own, that by your indecent yawning, your filthy ſnoring, or repeated nodding before his eyes, his pleaſure hath yielded to ſurprize—his ſurprize to grief, and his grief to diſcouragement, until he has ſcarcely poſſeſſed ſufficient fortitude to cloſe the ſentence he had begun, and a ſeaſon which promiſed univerſal delight, becomes, through your accurſed indolence, tormenting to the preacher, and unprofitable to attentive hearers.

What mean you thus to ſleep and break our hearts! Have we not diſcouragements enough in the world, that you muſt bring yours into the ſanctuary! Shall we labour to exclude

every thing from our recollection that would ſadden our ſpirits whilſt we are worſhipping in the beauty of Holineſs, and will you, to our faces, counteract our efforts; and inſtead of animating our devotion by your cheerful attention, reſign yourſelves to the inſenſibility of logs, till you diffuſe ſtupidity or grief over all around?

Will you apologize by urging a drowſy habit of body which induces a natural lethargy? I aſk you, why are you not lethargic in your buſineſs? Which of your cuſtomers do you inſult as you do the congregation and the Miniſter with whom you profeſs to unite in divine worſhip? Who ſees you aſleep in your ſhops, or in the circle of your friends? When do you cloſe your eyes over a newſ-paper? or your ears to a tale of ſcandal?—Abuſe your conſcience no longer. This is the fact—either you make the day of God a day of *intemperate indulgence*, and ſo criminally induce that drowſineſs which is your conſtant diſgrace, and renders you common nuiſances to every congregation that you viſit, or elſe your reverence for God and attachment to the Goſpel of Jeſus, is little more than mere profeſſion; for nothing can be more evident or eaſy to be underſtood than this, that if the concerns of the world will keep you awake at the ſame hours, and in the ſame circumſtances as thoſe in which you ſleep in the houſe of God, it muſt be becauſe you have not ſo much reliſh for, nor feel your heart ſo much intereſted in religion as about the world.—You may draw your own concluſion.

Be perſuaded to anſwer the following queſtions.—Do you believe that public worſhip is an ordinance of God? Do you believe that *Chriſt is always preſent* where two or three are met in his name? Do you believe there is a day of reckoning at hand, when he who inſpects his churches now, will call you to his bar?—Will not all ſuch deſpiſers of Chriſt and his worſhip, as you are, be aſhamed before him at his coming?

Becauſe efforts from the pulpit have been unſucceſsful, this is made from the preſs. Should it fail of its deſign, you muſt ſleep on, till an inſulted God ſhall meet you in awful retribution. Of your guilt, your Miniſters waſh their hands, and appeal to Heaven and to you, that they are not partakers of your ſins.

A NARRATIVE

Of a Revival of Religion in the South Parish of Killingly in the years 1800 *and* 1801, *communicated to the Editors by the Rev.* ISRAEL DAY, *Paſtor of the church in ſaid Pariſh.*

[Continued from Page 80.]

HOWEVER, notwithſtanding all theſe embarraſſments, God was pleaſed to appear on the ſide of truth. In the beginning of October 1800, there were ſome appearances which began to encourage the praying ſaint. About the ſame time, we were favored with a viſit, from a young man in the miniſtry, from the ſtate of New-Hampſhire, who was formerly from this Pariſh, and was one who appeared to be a ſubject of religion among us, in the forementioned revival, in the year 1788; having been abſent almoſt twelve years. At the cloſe of a ſermon, he gave the people an account of the work of God, among the people where he reſided. He then addreſſed thoſe who were his former companions, by enquiring of them, the ſtate of their ſouls, &c. This ſeemed to be a means of rendering the whole aſſembly very ſolemn. In the evening a conference was attended and a larger number of young people were preſent than uſually met on ſuch occaſions. At the cloſe the people were informed that our weekly conferences would be attended at my houſe; and as there appeared to be a degree of thoughtfulneſs taking place on the minds of ſome, they were admoniſhed not to ſtifle the motions of the Holy Spirit, but to meet with their Chriſtian friends the next Friday, to confer further upon the important ſubject.—In the courſe of the ſame week I called at a houſe to converſe with a young woman, whom I found before under ſome awakening. When I came to converſe with her I found her under deep impreſſions of ſoul: her mother coming into the room, was ſomewhat affected, knowing that ſomething affected her daughter, but did not know that it was a concern for her ſoul. I found the mother was in the like caſe. On Friday, the time for our conference, inſtead of a few as formerly, my houſe was filled: and ſolemnity ſat on the countenances of many, while a few were pricked in their hearts. It ſoon

began to appear that many had been under ſerious impreſſions, for ſome time, and kept it to themſelves; but now were under the neceſſity of making it known.

From this time our meetings for preaching and conference were crouded and ſolemn. We were under the neceſſity, for want of room, of leaving a private houſe and the ſchool-houſe, and of repairing to the meeting houſe. For a number of months in the winter ſeaſon, it ſeemed, that eternal things engroſſed almoſt the whole attention of the congregation. All appeared to be intereſted in the truths, doctrines and duties of religion.—Thus, they were anxious to hear and know what they ſhould do to be ſaved.

My houſe was frequently reſorted to, by enquirers, and the ſcenes were truly affecting. Perſons from twelve years of age to forty, and ſo on to ſixty, juſt beginning to know that they were ſinners againſt God. They who had often heard of their dreadful ſtate, while ſtupid, now began to confeſs, with tears, that they were under the curſe of God's holy law; that all their lives they had deſpiſed Chriſt and his religion. Some ſeemed to awake as from a dream and wondered that theſe things had never been ſeen by them before.—One expreſſed herſelf thus, "When I was firſt awakened I thought my life muſt be reformed, and I would ſet about the work of reformation, in earneſt; but I ſoon found that my heart was ſo wicked there was no reforming it. I found that God muſt change this heart of mine, or I was undone forever." Others, when firſt awakened, had views of their ſins of omiſſion and ſome actual ſins which they had committed; but by being followed by the Spirit of God, they ſoon found that their hearts were at enmity with God: and in ſome inſtances, perſons have ſaid that their unhappineſs was, that they felt ſenſible enmity againſt God. It gave them pain to ſee what God was, and what he was doing, and would do. God made uſe of various means to awaken the careleſs, beſides the preaching of the goſpel. Sometimes paſſages of ſcripture came like arrows to the heart. Such as theſe; "*The axe is laid to the root of the tree, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.*" One who had religious parents and anceſtors, was ſtruck with the thought that the piety of the family ſhould ceaſe in him. Some, that

their huſbands or wives, or their young companions were ſetting out in religion, and that they were like to be left. The thought of being left of God, would often ſtrike them to the heart.

As the work of conviction increaſed, they were driven from their hiding places, and obtained more clear and diſtinct views of the extenſive nature of the divine commands; and found their hearts to be a fountain of iniquity, from whence flowed all their actual ſins. Thoſe who were brought to receive the light of divine truth ſhining in the face of Jeſus, previous thereto, were made ſenſible that in heart they were ſo oppoſed to holineſs, that they lay wholly at the mercy of God;—that God would be juſt to caſt them off forever; and that his declaration, "*I will have mercy on whom I have mercy*," was their only ground of hope; that it would be juſt in God to leave them to be veſſels of wrath, fitted for deſtruction; or if it ſhould pleaſe him, to bring them to a cordial ſubmiſſion and make them veſſels of mercy, prepared for glory, it would be all grace, and that they of all the ſaved race ſhould be moſt indebted to ſovereign mercy. As to thoſe who are viewed hopefully converted; with reſpect to the manner and circumſtances of obtaining comfort, and the degree of joy and peace there has been a difference. In a few inſtances their conviction has been ſhort and their joy ſudden, being filled with admiring views of God, diſcovered in his law, in his goſpel and in his righteous government. The words of the Pſalmiſt were ſweet to them.—"*The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice.*" Alſo the natural world appeared to ſhine with divine luſtre, and in its various ways to praiſe God, and they ſaid they longed to join in praiſing him forever. But it was the caſe with many, that their convictions were [illegible]ng. Some perſons who were brought up in families where religion had been maintained, had been under convictions at ſeaſons from their childhood. By the Spirit of God, ſuch were often brought gradually to hope that their hearts were brought into ſubmiſſion to him. It was often the caſe that this was effected by a reflex view of the working of the Spirit of God in their hearts. In ſome inſtances ſuch on receiving light, concluded that their convictions had gone and God had left them to a hard heart; for before this change they had thought if God ſhould convert

them, they ſhould not only look on themſelves as very holy and good, but they ſhould know that God had renewed their hearts, by his grace. But now to ſee themſelves ſuch wicked ill-deſerving and hell-deſerving wretches, as much ſo and if poſſible more ſo than they were before the time of their awakening, it could not be that their hearts were renewed by grace, though they ſenſibly felt the contention between God and their own hearts to be at an end. But by being often brought to give up themſelves and all that was dear to them, into the hands of a ſovereign God, without any reſerve; by beholding the beauty and excellency of the divine law which condemned them; the glory of Chriſt as the end of the law to all who love and believe on him, they could not refrain from believing, truſting and committing their ſouls to him. Some have ſaid that their views of the ſufficiency of Chriſt were ſuch, that if they had *many ſouls*, they would truſt them *all in his hand*, and hope for ſalvation in his name.

Previous to the religious attention among us, public worſhip was greatly neglected by many whole families, as well as by individuals; but when God began to work, how comforting to Zion's friends, to ſee them flocking to hear the word preached, on the ſabbath and at other ſeaſons! It appeared that they felt themſelves intereſted in the things which they heard. We had no diſorder or outcries ſo as to make any diſturbance in our public meetings; yet the ſolemnity was like going to the grave, or to judgment. No one but thoſe who know by experience can conceive the joy which has taken place among the people of God. In regard to family prayer, in ſome inſtances where there were but very few who called upon the name of the Lord formerly, now almoſt whole neighbourhoods have engaged in this duty, that if one were to paſs among them at certain ſeaſons, he would be conſtrained to ſay, ſurely God is in this place. Parents in a public manner devoting themſelves, their little ones, and all that they have to the Lord.

How pleaſing the ſcenes to behold the aged and the young of both ſexes leaving the follies, peculiar to their age and becoming followers of the lowly Jeſus. The pious parent's heart in a number of inſtances partook of joy inexpreſſible to ſee the divine bleſſing poured on them, agreeably to the promiſe in Iſaiah, "*I will pour my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my-*

bleſſing upon thine offspring;" to ſee thoſe who were of themſelves ariſing and building the old waſte places, and repairing the breaches of former generations. In a few inſtances almoſt whole families have been affected, and they have eſpouſed the cauſe of Chriſt, before a vain and deluded world.

Since the work of God revived in this place, ſixty-four perſons have been united to the church; and ninety have been baptized, on their own, or on their parents' account. On one ſabbath ſix houſholds were preſented and baptized, containing twenty-three children. This circumſtance, accompanied with a ſermon on the duty of parents to their children, under the divine agency, was made a mean of good to many. It was noticed by children. In one inſtance a child aſked her mother, who made no profeſſion of religion, "Mamma, why am not I baptized?" This went to the mother's heart. We hope the wound was healed by the blood of Jeſus, and ſhe enabled to give herſelf, her children and all that ſhe had, into the hands of God.

Thoſe who have made a profeſſion of religion in this time of attention, have appeared to adorn their profeſſion by their obſervance of the commands of Chriſt; but ſhould it be the caſe, that in a ſhort time we ſhould have exceptions to make, becauſe ſome return like the "dog to his own vomit again; and the ſow that was waſhed, to her wallowing in the mire," it ought not to be noticed as any thing againſt religion; but an evidence of the depravity and treachery of the human heart. Tares are often found among wheat, and falſe profeſſors among real Chriſtians. God has ſeen it needful to leave ſome of his own children to fall, to try them, thereby to make them more fit for their maſter's uſe and ſervice. And if ſome poor hardened ſinners are wiſhing that thoſe who have deſerted their company may turn back; God may according to his word ſend them this deluſion, and let them try to feed their ſouls with the ſins of his profeſſing people. While the ſinners' hearts are hardening and preparing for deſtruction; God calls the backſlider, he returns, condemns his ſhameful apoſtacy, and by making confeſſion he brings glory to God and ſhame upon ſinners. Sinners in a day of divine grace ſhould fear, leſt while they are watching others and neglecting their own ſouls, the Spirit ſhould be quenched, and that come on them ſpoken by the prophet to Iſrael in their rebellion; "that

they might go and fall backward, and be broken, and ſnared, and taken." Though we fear that ſome who have appeared to run well for a ſeaſon, will apoſtatize, and thereby grieve the generation of God's children; yet we hope better things of many, who have appeared to embrace the truth in this joyful ſeaſon, and things that accompany ſalvation. We have raiſed expectations that God who has exerted the power of ſovereign grace, in changing their hearts, will put forth the ſame exertions in keeping them through faith, to eternal life.

There are many, who cavil at the ſimilarity of the accounts given of the work of God in various places, and the likeneſs of individual narratives; and would fain ſuggeſt that theſe things were learned from each other; but if ſuch perſons would call to mind and carefully attend to the following things, they would be conſtrained to ſay that their likeneſs was an evidence of the truth of them, viz. The natural hearts of all men are alike in the ſame ſtate of total moral depravity.—All men have to do with the ſame God. All men have a ſimilar monitor or conſcience within them, are under the ſame law, hear the ſame goſpel, enjoy the ſame bible and means of religion. All men are called or moved by the ſame Spirit, are in the ſame world and are bound to the ſame eternity. From theſe conſiderations it is not ſtrange that perſons who never ſaw or heard of each other, when born again by the Spirit of God ſhould ſpeak the ſame things, and when met ſhould converſe as though they had been born of the ſame parents and educated under the ſame means. This inſtead of being an argument againſt religion is a clear proof that it is from God.

And now may the God of hope fill us with all joy, and peace in believing; and grant that we, who have named the name of Chriſt, may depart from iniquity. Amen.

From yours, &c.

ISRAEL DAY.

Killingly, Auguſt, 1802.

[*From the London Evangelical Magazine.*]

ADVERTISEMEMT.

An Infallible Medicine for the Cure of a dangerous Diſorder, to be had GRATIS.

WHEREAS a moſt violent and dangerous diſeaſe has greatly prevailed in this neighbourhood, as well as in many other places, much reſembling the plague, a friend of mankind has thought it expedient to publiſh the following account of it, with its various ſymptoms and effects, and to recommend a method of cure, which has never failed in a ſingle inſtance.

This diſeaſe has long been known among the learned by a variety of names. The *Greek* phyſicians called it AMARTIA. It may be diſcovered by the following ſymptoms. The *head* is always affected, particularly the eyes, ſo that moſt objects are miſtaken for each other. The *underſtanding* is clouded. The patient is ſometimes *deaf*, eſpecially to certain ſubjects of diſcourſe. The *tongue* is ſo ſtrangely diſordered, that it ſpeaks perverſe and blaſphemous words. The patient has occaſional fits of *lameneſs* eſpecially when it is propoſed to walk to a place of worſhip. But the heart is the principal ſeat of the diſeaſe, from the affections of which, the ſenſes and members are alſo diſordered. This diſeaſe is, upon good grounds, ſuppoſed to be hereditary, and may be traced back to the common parent of mankind. It is therfore *univerſal*; ſo that there never was but one Man in the world exempted from a taint of it.

The preſent effects of this diſorder are very dreadful. It ſometimes produces a raging *fever*, inſatiable *thirſt*, and extreme *reſtleſsneſs*. The mind is at times alarmed and filled with *anxiety*. The patient diſcovers *pride*, *envy*, *malice*, *covetouſneſs*, *luſt*, and *deceit*. His family, friends, and neighbours, are frequently ſufferers, as many in this place can teſtify. Magiſtrates are ſometimes forced to interfere, and though they ſeldom attempt a cure, they prevent his doing further miſchief.

But the final conſequences of this diſeaſe are formidabl in the utmoſt degree. Unleſs timely aſſiſtance be afforded (which muſt generally be in the early ſtages of it,) the pati-

ent inevitably periſhes. Death, dreadful death, muſt enſue: and that, attended with ſuch circumſtances of miſery, horror and deſpair, that humanity is conſtrained to draw a veil over the terrible ſcene.

It is neceſſary to add, that by far the greater part of thoſe on whom it preys, are utterly inſenſible of their condition, and unwilling to admit that they are ill. It is probable that ſome who read this advertiſement may feel themſelves angry with this repreſentation of their caſe, and be ready to throw it aſide with diſdain. A certain indication this, that the patient is dangerouſly diſordered. But this may, at the ſame time, account for the general and fatal neglect of applying in time to

THE PHYSICIAN.

This extraordinary Man is not indeed a *ſeventh ſon*, but the *only Son*, of a moſt high and diſtinguiſhed Perſonage. He was intended for the profeſſion from his birth, and in all reſpects properly qualified for it. His ſkill, tenderneſs, and care, were never impeached by any one of the thouſands of patients, whom he has perfectly reſtored. His practice has been incomparably extenſive, and millions can teſtify, that by Him the blind have received their ſight, the lame have leaped as an hart, lepers have been cleanſed, the deaf have been made quick of hearing, and many dead perſons have been reſtored to life. After a life of the moſt benevolent exertions, he was put to death by the malice of ſome ignorant practitioners, who envied his fame and ſucceſs. However, the world ſtill reaps the benefit of that *ſpecific medicine* which he prepared. Certain perſons, appointed by him, committed his advice to writing, and have recorded it in a moſt excellent family book, which has gone through a thouſand editions, and is commonly called

THE BIBLE.

Here we learn that *ſin* is the great diſeaſe of the human race; that it has the moſt unhappy effects on the bodies and ſouls of men; that it has introduced all the miſeries under which they groan. Herein alſo we are taught that no man can cure himſelf of this diſeaſe; and though a multitude of quacks have recommended noſtrums of their own, there is only one medicine in the world that can effect a cure.

Reader, go and learn what that meaneth: *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin.*

[*From the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine.*]

EXPERIENCES OF A PIOUS WOMAN.

GOD was pleaſed in his adorable ſovereignty, to ſtrive with me by his Holy Spirit from my earlieſt childhood, but how often did I grieve his Spirit, though favoured with every advantage of a religious nature; but how great was his mercy who did not leave me to myſelf, but made me to feel the deep pollution of my nature, and that the thoughts of the imagination of the heart were evil, only evil, and that continually; and that the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, is not ſubject to his law, neither can be while unrenewed;—and thoſe words ſounded dreadful in my ears, "Ephraim is joined to idols let him alone." I ſaw that if God ſhould caſt me off forever it would be juſt. But bleſſed be God who did not leave me to deſpair of mercy, but enabled me to ſeek him in all the ways of his appointment, and earneſtly to deſire that he would make my way plain with regard to coming to the Lord's table; and he was pleaſed to anſwer my requeſt, by putting it into the heart of a dear friend to mention her deſire of joining herſelf to the church, and ſhe wiſhed I would alſo. I ſaid I would conſider of it—I had many times endeavoured to give myſelf up to God in covenant, but always ſeemed to fall ſhort.

I thought I would once more attempt it, and if I was enabled to do it in private, I might then preſume to make a public profeſſion. Accordingly I retired, and I truſt was enabled to act this time more ſincerely than ever before; but when I was endeavouring to give myſelf up, it came to my mind, "you have no faith, and without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God." It occurred to me, faith is the gift of God: It was alſo ſuggeſted, you have never repented of ſin. Then thoſe words came to mind, "Chriſt is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance as well as remiſſion of ſin." I then ſaw that he was juſt ſuch a Saviour as my ſoul needed—every way ſuited to my loſt and undone condition. I ſaw him to be glorious in his offices as a Prophet to inſtruct—as a Prieſt to atone for my ſins—as a King to rule and reign over me, and to ſubdue every thing within me diſpleaſing to himſelf, and to enable me to yield myſelf entirely to him, to work

within me both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure, and earneſtly to cry to him for holineſs of heart. I was at length enabled to take the bond of the covenant upon me and to call God and the holy angels to witneſs, that I did then ſolemnly give myſelf to God the Father as my God and Father, to God the Son as my Saviour and Redeemer—to God the Holy Ghoſt as my ſanctifier, guide and comforter; and under an abaſing ſenſe of my utter inability to keep this covenant, theſe words came with power, "I am underſtanding, I am ſtrength." But I have powerful enemies and my heart is exceedingly deceitful: this idea came to me, he is the captain of our ſalvation who was made perfect through ſuffering. I was enabled to enliſt under his banner and truſt him to work in me both to will and do his whole good pleaſure. My ſoul was delighted with a view of the completeneſs—the all-ſufficiency of this ſalvation, and I was calling upon my ſoul and all within me to praiſe him; well replied my heart, ſuppoſe he caſt you off, muſt I yet praiſe him? Yes—for if he ſhould he is juſt, ſeeing I rejected his call and grieved his Spirit, and would not that he ſhould reign over me. But ſtill there remained a hope, that he would not caſt me off, and I thought I ſhould be willing to beg at his feet all my days, if he would ſhew mercy at the laſt hour. But ſtill there remained a fear with regard to coming to the Lord's table, of the doom of the man that had not on the wedding garment: But I was told that he came in his own righteouſneſs, not in that of Chriſt—I plainly ſaw that I had none, and looked upon myſelf as a beaſt before God—exceedingly vile and ſtupid. I thought thoſe words in Ezekiel were applicable to me; "caſt out to the loathing of my perſon." But my notion of faith was, an act of my own which God was to enable me to put forth—and I found myſelf unable to do any thing but caſt myſelf at the feet of a ſovereign God, waiting on him for Chriſt's ſake, to work in me both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure. And with this frame of heart, I ventured to join the church, reſolving, if I periſhed, it ſhould be waiting on him in all the ways of his appointment.

Well may I be filled with aſtoniſhment, at the amazing love of God to the moſt ungrateful of all his creatures. The thought that God foreordained whatſoever comes to paſs, for his own glory, has been very ſweet to me. And I have been

enabled, in ſome meaſure, to love myſelf with the ſame love I bear to beings in general, and rejoice to be diſpoſed of as ſhall moſt advance the kingdom of my dear Redeemer. I long for greater degrees of benevolence to all mankind, to be more delivered from a ſelfiſh contracted ſpirit, and for more enlargements in prayer for the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, for the church to which I belong, and for my dear brothers and ſiſters, that Chriſt may be formed in their ſouls.

But ſome time after, I began to grow cold and ſtupid, and was ready to call all in queſtion, and to fear I had been deceiving myſelf, and that I ſhould turn to folly again; and in this fear I went to lecture, where the miniſter was very large in deſcribing what a true work of converſion was; and God was pleaſed to accompany the word with his Holy Spirit, and diſcover to me that the work was all his own. But I was made to ſee more of the evil of ſin, and to loathe myſelf and repent in duſt and aſhes, and alſo for my pride and vile idolatry. I ſaw that every thing which took the place which God ought to have, was an idol, however mean in itſelf. But how aſtoniſhing that God ſhould ſay, "give me thy heart, and a new heart will I give unto you, a right ſpirit will I put within you. I will cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes, I will be your God and ye ſhall be my people."

A SOLEMN CALCULATION.

"THE aggregate population on the ſurface of the known habitable globe, is eſtimated at 895,300,000 ſouls. If we reckon, with the ancients, that a generation laſts 30 years, then in that ſpace 895,300,000 human beings will be born and die; conſequently 81,760 muſt be dropping into eternity every *day*—3,407 every *hour*,—or about 56 every *minute*! How awful is the reflection!"

Reader, is it not the moſt dreadful infatuation to trifle with eternal things, on the brink of that awful world, into which more than

"A thouſand wretched dying ſouls have fled
Since the laſt ſetting ſun." WATTS.

Thou art yet in the number of the "living, who know that they ſhall die," Oh! may it be thy concern and mine, ſo to "number our days, that we may apply our hearts to that wiſdom," which makes men "wiſe unto ſalvation, through faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus. [*London Magazine.*]